



The President's Daily Brief

December 24, 1975

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~~*Top Secret*~~ 25X1

Exempt from general
declassification schedule of E.O. 11652
exemption category 5B(1)(2)(3)
declassified only on approval of
the Director of Central Intelligence

December 24, 1975

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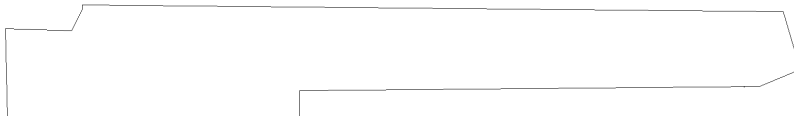
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USSR-PALESTINIANS



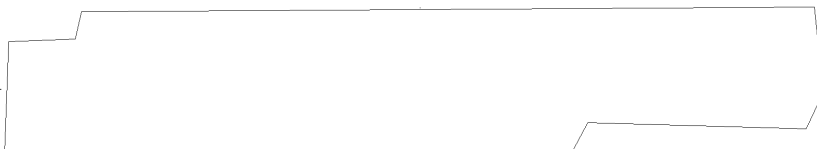
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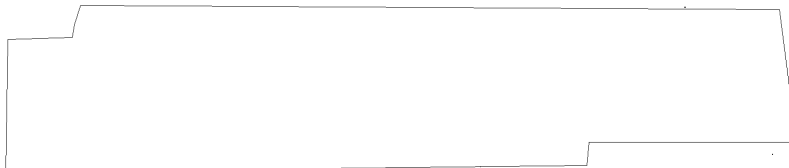
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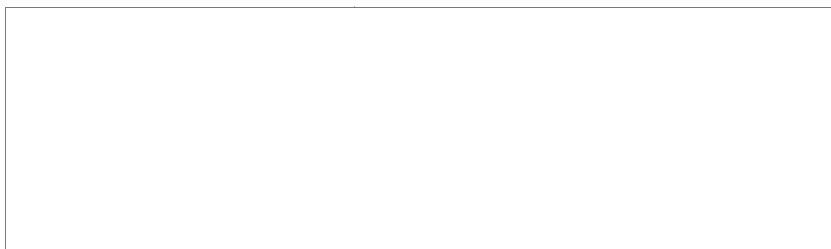
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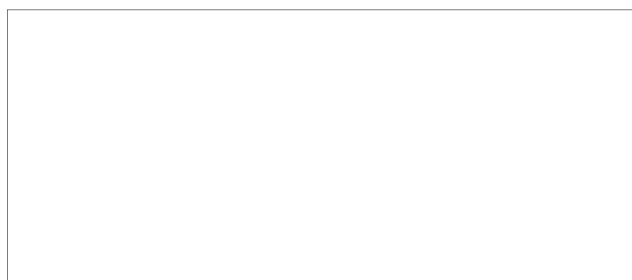
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EGYPT-LEBANON



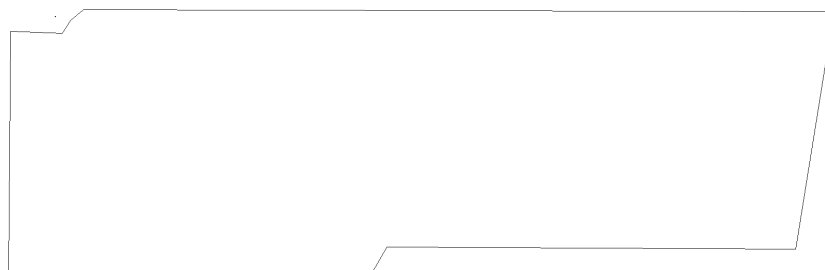
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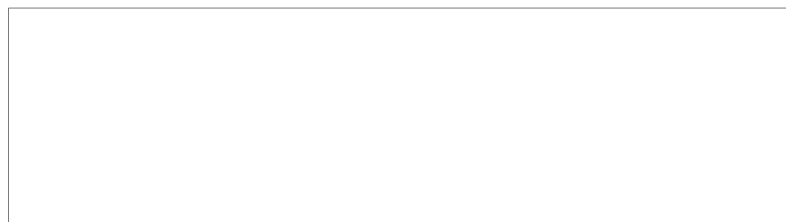
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LEBANON

Lebanon and Syria have issued no official statement on Prime Minister Karami's visit to Damascus on Monday. Generally reliable press reports say that an effort will be undertaken to limit the flow of arms to the warring parties in Lebanon. This is part of a wider understanding that includes plans for implementing the cease-fire, resuming high-level negotiations on political reform, and holding a meeting of Syrian and Lebanese heads of state.

President Franjiah has been hoping that President Asad will invite him to Damascus to meet with Saudi King Khalid tomorrow. Franjiah probably calculates that such a meeting would bolster his political standing even if it did not help end the fighting in Lebanon. A Lebanese official has said that Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasir Arafat may also join the group.

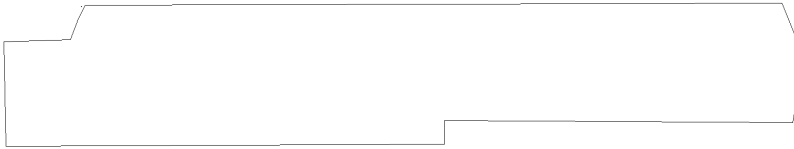
Franjiah and Asad have not met since January, before this year's fighting began. A meeting of the two has been under consideration for some months as a means of stimulating progress in the endless political negotiations.

Asad, however, may abandon any plans to meet with Franjiah as the result of allegations by Lebanese Christian leaders this week that Syrian or Syrian-controlled Palestinian forces have joined in the fighting in Lebanon. Both Damascus and the PLO have denied these charges.

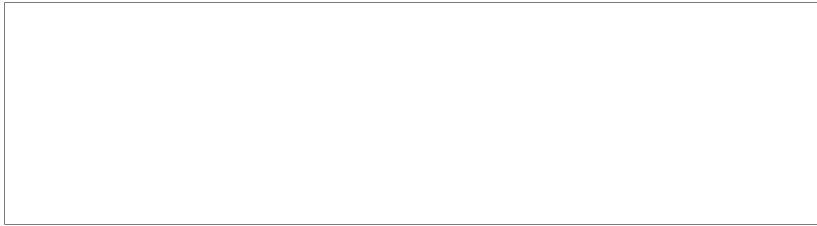
Some troops from Fatah's Yarmuk Brigade, Saiqa, and the Palestine Liberation Army--all heavily influenced or controlled by Syria--apparently did participate in the heavy clashes at Zahlah. They joined radical fedayeen and local leftist militias to form a combined force of approximately 2,000 to attack the predominantly Christian town.

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PORTUGAL

New appointments to Portugal's all-military Revolutionary Council appear to complete the purge of leftists from the highest levels of the armed forces, while at the same time serving notice that the military does not intend to abandon altogether its political role.

The vacancies on the Council resulting from the dismissal of two leftist navy officers following the November 25 military uprising have been filled by two navy officers who also serve as cabinet ministers. Commanders Almeida e Costa and Vitor Crespo were confirmed during an all-night meeting of the Revolutionary Council that approved the economic austerity measures adopted earlier by the cabinet.

Both officers are strong anti-Communists, but their appointments otherwise maintain the balance on the Council between the so-called political officers, who are led by Foreign Minister Melo Antunes, and the "professionals," who seem to be gravitating toward newly appointed army Chief of Staff Eanes.

The "professionals" generally emphasize the need for strict discipline in the armed forces and dedication to their military function. The Antunes group seems intent on carving out a continuing political role for itself.

The differences between the two groups appear to be largely a matter of degree; even the "professional" officers are unwilling to give the civilian politicians a free hand. The point of divergence comes on whether the military should lead the nation to "democracy and socialism"--as Antunes maintains--or should merely provide order and stability and let the people decide whether they want socialism.

The squabbling among the politicians will tend to confirm the officers' belief that the military must continue to play at least a limited role in government if anything is to be accomplished.

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Quarrels among the political parties are focusing again on the issue of representation in the cabinet. Popular Democratic leader Sa Carneiro told a party rally on Monday that the proposed reorganization of the Azevedo government, which would give the Socialists four ministers, the Popular Democrats three, and the Communists two, was unacceptable because it would double Communist representation. The Socialists as well as Foreign Minister Antunes have argued that Communists should be in the government in order to share responsibility for the tougher economic measures that must come.

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SPAIN

The new Spanish government may be moving discreetly to encourage and strengthen the less radical Socialist leaders and to isolate the Communists.

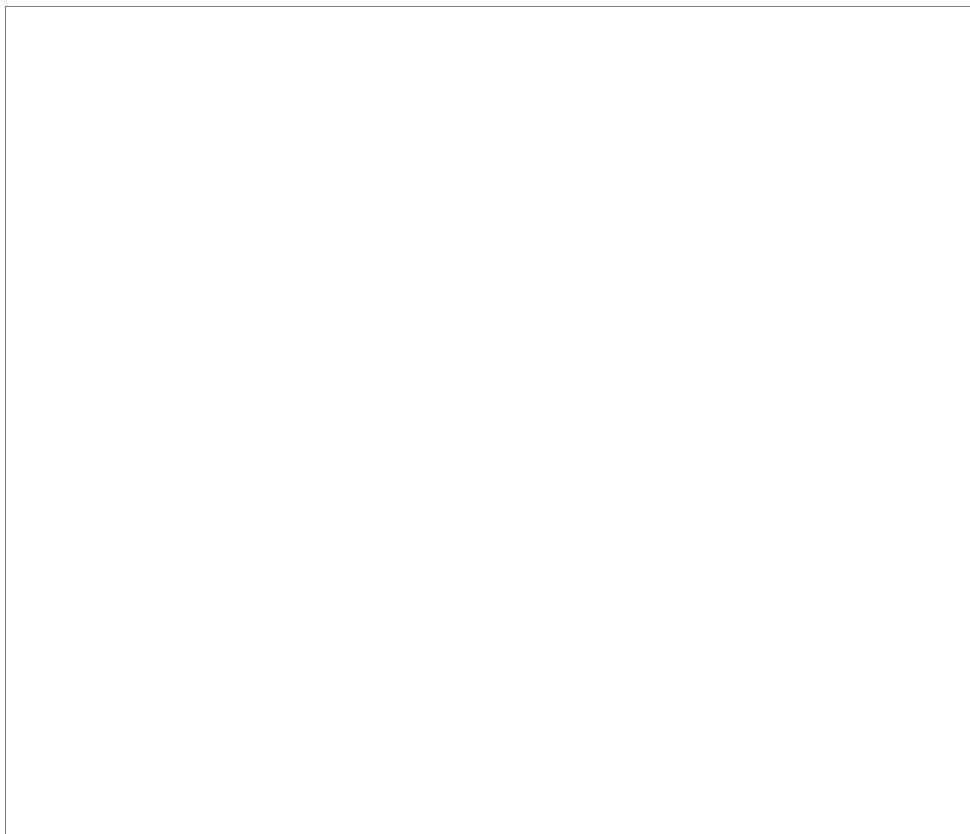
Minister of Information Manuel Fraga Iribarne recently met the leader of the Popular Socialist Party, Tierno Galvan. Fraga told Ambassador Stabler that he hopes to wean Tierno Galvan away from the Communists and encourage the development of a Socialist coalition composed of factions outside the largest Socialist group, the Socialist Workers Party.

Following the meeting, Tierno Galvan told the press he believes the government is moving in a positive direction. He also announced the formation of a confederation made up of his own Popular Socialists and various regional Socialist parties now affiliated with the Communist-dominated Democratic Junta. The participating groups reportedly are concerned that the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party may be increasingly influenced by the Communists.

The government's recent decision to grant an amnesty to Rodolfo Llopis, who is now in exile, may be part of the effort to undercut the Socialist Workers. Llopis claims that his group represents the traditional right wing of the Socialist Party, and he opposes any cooperation with the Communists. Llopis will reportedly return to Spain next month.

The bickering Socialist factions will find it difficult to resolve their differences and compete with the Socialist Workers Party. The latter is the major non-Communist force on the Spanish left and is the only Spanish party recognized by the Socialist International. The party receives support from West European Socialists, and its leader, Felipe Gonzalez, has recently traveled to West Germany and Sweden to strengthen his contacts there. Gonzalez has stressed that the opposition should form a broad alliance and that the Communist Party should be legalized.

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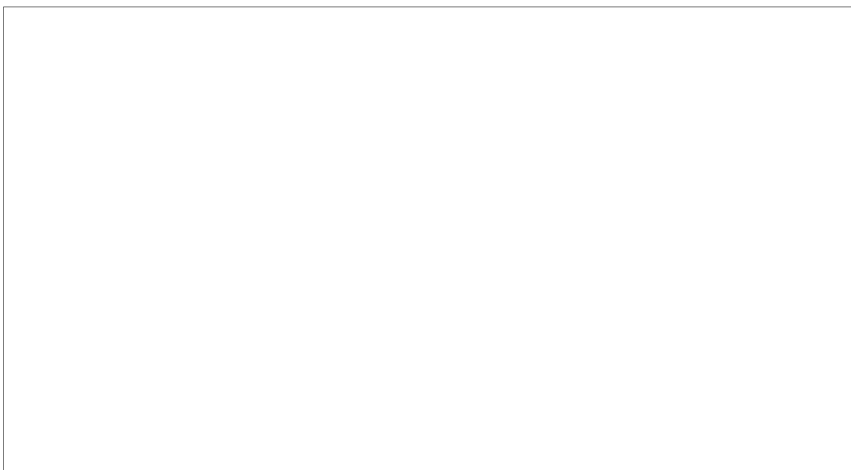
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NOTES

The Soviet guided-missile destroyer moving down the coast of Africa was about 60 miles east of the Canary Islands early today.

Two tankers are accompanying the destroyer, which at its present speed will reach Conakry, Guinea, on Saturday or Sunday. The Soviets have used the port facilities at Conakry since 1960. We do not know now whether the destroyer will stop there or proceed to the vicinity of Angola.

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The Soviet Union has begun to airlift food and petroleum from Hanoi to Laos to help alleviate shortages caused by the closure of the Thai border; so far, only one AN-12 is being used.

The Soviets had hoped, in addition, to move supplies by air from Bangkok to Vientiane. Thai Foreign Minister Chatchai told the press on Monday, however, that he would permit such an airlift only after the border is reopened. Chatchai said that the border could be reopened after Thai and Lao officials have met to discuss the continued influx of refugees from Laos, the smuggling of arms into Thailand and commodities into Laos, and "other problems."

Lao Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Phoun Sipraseut on Monday publicly ruled out any talks with Bangkok until Thailand reopens the border and "sincerely displays a friendly attitude of true neighborliness."

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Chancellor Bruno Kreisky hopes to persuade UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim not to seek re-election when his current term expires next year.

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Waldheim has mentioned his disappointment with the UN post on several occasions

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Although not a member of any party, he has been more closely associated with the opposition People's Party than with Kreisky's Socialists. Prior to last October's election, when Kreisky thought he might not get a majority, the Chancellor talked of forming a government of experts of varied political backgrounds. Waldheim's presence in the government would broaden its support. He served as foreign minister in the last conservative government between 1968 and 1970.

USSR-ANGOLA

The following is a CIA view of the future of the Soviet commitment in Angola.

Moscow's performance in Angola over the past several months bespeaks a rather tough and unyielding cast of mind regarding its support for the MPLA. The Soviets have been unflinching in the face of the countervailing pressures that have arisen, both in Africa and the US, during those months. Moscow seems to be saying, both on the ground in Angola and in its public utterances, that it is willing to go a significant distance to support an MPLA victory.

Moscow is also saying that appeals to the idea of detente will not deter the Soviet Union from pursuing what it regards as its legitimate role as a world power. Angola has become the occasion, perhaps intentionally, more likely fortuitously, for the Soviets to make a point that they have been anxious to assert since the brouhahas over Vietnam and Somalia, namely, that the Soviet Union will not allow the US to establish the ground rules of detente.

This means that if the US, for domestic reasons, cannot bring its power to bear in a given arena, then it will be compelled to accept the consequences. The Soviet Union will not, out of a magnanimous spirit, forego opportunities to strengthen its position in the world or use its influence to protect US interests.

In their present frame of mind, the Soviets are unresponsive to arguments that their actions in Angola will unduly complicate their broader relations with the US. The detente atmosphere was palpably soured over trade, emigration, and SALT II before Angola became a political issue between the two countries. The Soviets are also likely to view as hypocritical complaints about the incompatibility of detente and Angola in the light of extensive US publicity over Chile and assassinations and against real US gains at Moscow's expense in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East, as well as in Portugal.

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The Soviets are skeptical that Washington will step back from a SALT agreement because of Angola, or will refuse to market its surplus grain in the Soviet Union because the MPLA strengthens its hold on Luanda. The Soviets probably calculate that real interests of the two countries are at the heart of the actual rather than the rhetorical detente relationship and that the impact of Angola is not likely to be of lasting consequence.

This kind of analysis would commend itself to Brezhnev because he has strong domestic political reasons for pursuing a tough line now on Angola. It is a place where he can demonstrate that detente not only creates opportunities for "social progress," but also does not inhibit the Soviet Union from taking advantage of them. Angola, to some extent, offsets Cunhal's reversal in Portugal, the disappointment of Helsinki, the policy debacle in Egypt. With detente providing few concrete gains, and the Party Congress approaching, he probably finds it politic to stress orthodox ideological themes.

The Near Future

The factors which have contributed to Moscow's Angola policy could change in significant ways over the next few months. For one thing, there is some evidence of disagreement in the Kremlin on Angola.

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[REDACTED] it is possible that Moscow will be inclined to show some restraint if it looks as if it will have to pay a substantial price for continuing the current tough policy.

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If Brezhnev gets through the Party Congress in good shape, politically as well as physically, he may feel under less pressure to show that he is willing and able to stand up to the Americans. The pain associated with the setbacks in agriculture and the economic entrenchment may be less obstrusive. The Soviets may therefore feel somewhat less defensive vis-a-vis the US and less compelled to demonstrate that they are dealing from a position

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of strength. Any progress on bilateral issues such as SALT would tend to refocus attention on the detente relationship and relegate, in the eyes of the world as well as the leaders in Moscow, Angola to the wings. This would then make it easier for Moscow to cut a deal on Angola.

As we move into the next year, the Soviets will also be paying more attention to the impact of their actions on US politics. The Kremlin will, of course, want to avoid giving the US reason to believe that it has significant leverage because of Moscow's desire to abet the election fortunes of the supporters of detente. But Angola is the kind of place where the Soviets can afford to show some restraint in the interest of not poisoning the atmosphere during the election period.

But whether such "restraint" will be forthcoming will also depend greatly on the situation on the ground in Angola. At one end of the spectrum, the Soviets are unlikely to show much restraint if there is a serious threat to the continued existence of the MPLA in Luanda. Moscow cannot afford another highly visible defeat, particularly between now and the Party Congress, and particularly in a situation like Angola where the "victor" would seem to be the US. If this contingency threatened, we would expect the Soviets to send in more arms, more Cubans, and more of their own advisers. We strongly doubt that the Soviets will commit their own ground forces in significant numbers. The Soviets are likely to assert a presence with a token force of a few ships out of the Mediterranean, and respond to any larger US show of naval force.

At the other end of the spectrum, Angola does not yet figure so prominently in Soviet priorities that Moscow feels a strong imperative for an early and decisive victory there. But Moscow is not likely to apply significant pressure on Neto or the Cubans to refrain from significantly strengthening their territorial position, or routing the FNLA and UNITA if that seems possible with the forces and material at hand or in the pipeline.

The dynamic of the patron-client relationship is such that the Soviets would have a hard time keeping the MPLA reined in if victory appeared to

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be ahead. The problem is made worse by the Cubans who would make league with Neto in arguing that the Soviets should not rob them of the fruits of their efforts for reasons unrelated to Angola. Under these circumstances, it would be very hard for Brezhnev, or any other Soviet leader, to actively thwart the MPLA, (for example, by constricting the supply flow) at the behest of Washington.

This does not mean that the MPLA has a blank check. A gradual victory in Angola, which minimized the complications on the detente front while giving the Soviet Union what it wants, would be the ideal outcome for Moscow. If the Soviets judged that events were moving in this fashion, they would probably resist pressures from their clients to support a course aimed at a dramatic early victory.

If the conflict seemed to settle into a prolonged and indecisive stalemate, strong MPLA pressures would arise for an increase in aid, but it would also probably lead other Africans to argue more strongly for a political compromise. The Soviets probably have not yet made up their minds about how to handle this possibility. If it confronted them, the state of their relations with the US in general would be a factor in their reaction and we believe would lead them to accept some compromise solution rather than holding out and pressing for an MPLA "victory" over vigorous US countersupport of the FNLA and UNITA. If they had to make such a decision now, however, it looks as though they would opt for raising their Angolan stake, in the belief that the US is not likely to engage sufficiently to prevent them.

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